



LESSONS LEARNED RECORD OF INTERVIEW

Project Title and Code:			
LL-03 – U.S. Perception and Responses to Corruption in Afghanistan			
Interview Title:			
Interview with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)			
Interview Code:			
LL-03			
Date/Time:			
December 16, 2015, 11:00am-12:30pm			
Location:			
Washington, DC			
Purpose:			
To learn more about anti-corruption efforts and bodies established like TF-Shafafiyat and discuss corruption as it hindered those efforts.			
Interviewees: (Either list interviewees below, attach sign-in sheet to this document or hyperlink to a file)			
SIGAR Attendees:			
Jim Wasserstrom (Project Lead and Strategic Advisor); Brittany Gates (Research Analyst); Kate Bateman (Research Analyst)			
Sourcing Conditions (On the Record/On Background/etc.): Not for Attribution – Consult before quoting			
Recorded:	Yes	No	X
Recording File Record Number (if recorded):			
Prepared By: (Name, title and date)			
Brittany Gates – Research Analyst – 12/23/2015			
Reviewed By: (Name, title and date)			
Key Topics:			

Military's Trigger

The military recognized it [corruption] was a grave threat to the mission. People tried to get the military to focus on it like (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) McChrystal's assessment talked about corruption, organized crime, and institutional effectiveness. There was momentum behind the understanding and framing the problem; but Washington couldn't get their heads around it. The Department of State wrote a paper on functional corruption. In December 2006 it [corruption] depended mainly on unchallenged criminality. The setting up of Shafafiyat was to look at corruption from the Afghan perspective. Based on the recognition that money was flowing into the network and to some in the Karzai government. [Also,] the backlash of Holbrooke and Biden in the election brought corruption to the forefront. Karzai blamed it on the international effort. [Looked at] money to contracts, does that equal waste? It was fundamental to corruption and criminal patronage network because that undermined efforts and connected to the Taliban. Increasing the wartime economy. We (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) defined corruption from the Afghan perspective



LESSONS LEARNED RECORD OF INTERVIEW

and put all that up front. But we (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) couldn't see the flood of money to country's sub-regions and then to people.

TF 2010

It [TF 2010] was business intelligence and they did great work. The trucking contract [TF 2010 worked on] was tremendous work and in rewriting it. They [TF 2010] insisted on electronic payments to sub-contractors. TF 2010 did great work in preventing corruption. We [Shafafiyat] tried to do counter-corruption such as investigations and prosecutions. [We worked on] the National Military Hospital and Counter/Anti-Corruption Plan. Both organizations had complementary efforts. The problem is having a sustainment effort over time. [TF 2010?] was dismantled because of the Afghan standard and how our efforts would be perceived. They looked at it as an intractable problem. Those that looked at the relationships with mujahedin as the ends instead of it being the means. The opportunity to create a civ-mil team didn't work with Eikenberry and Petraeus. But when (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) came in, that is when we were able to get something done.

Karzai calculation and US/ISAF Response

Not everyone was on the same page which is important in combatting corruption. The argument was the assessment of achievement. The mission was to reduce corruption and organized crime so that it is no longer a threat to the mission. We tried to express empathy and would present to Karzai working with the Afghan National Security Council. Removed the cover for some of the most egregious actors. In going province to province removing those egregious actors from power.

Kabul Bank

This was the wrong network to target if you are trying to increase the political will of the Afghan government. It was a good case but it was a law enforcement approach to what was a political problem. Law enforcement effort has to be combined with a political effort. We learned when going after people (Popalzi networks). We presented to Karzai (top 20 drug traffickers) showing that list exposes the people and we made explicitly clear that protecting these people were bad. We can't just follow cases (learned that from Kabul Bank). We have to have political effort.

Kabul Bank as an Inflection Point

Gave those in DC an opportunity to not want to focus on anti-corruption. [Many] tried to portray counter-corruption efforts as naïve and didn't understand the culture of Afghanistan.

Did that affect it?

It did limit it. The focus on what you can control and have an effect on. Corruption and organized crime connected to the insurgency. We looked at state weakness and subversion, Afghan security forces, customs, rule of law, had working groups and teams that had Afghan partners. That was in an effort to engage civil society and have them put pressure on civil reform.

US/DC and International Community

Once we showed our stuff we got ___?___ from our coalition partners. We would put together investigations packages for those countries and brief those countries' ambassadors.

Other Anticorruption Bodies

I thought they [ATFC] were very effective in what they decided to do but it was too narrow to have a huge effect on the mission. There was corruption at borders and airports. We [Shafafiyat] tried to expose all that and get the



LESSONS LEARNED RECORD OF INTERVIEW

ATFC to work on it; it was hard to take it. The ICCTF was not very effective. But they tried to keep TF 2010 alive. We tried to pull it all [Shafafiyat, CJIATF-Nexus, and TF-Spotlight] together and have unity of effort. The IOCC relationship became very strong and build up trust and become effective. Nexus gave us regional intelligence aspect and have the networks connected to Kabul. Spotlight was forensic accounting. They were good. We were able to initiate suspension and debarment. No Contracting with the Enemy was helpful.

Recommendations

Illicit Initiative actives for Afghanistan and Pakistan based it on Treasury's activities for Korea. Signed by Secretary Clinton and Gates, but it died in the NSC. It bumped against misguidance that it will affect our political efforts. They have to ask the right questions. We don't understand other spaces/battlegrounds. Battle ground for political subversion they ____ to our mission. We don't recognize our institutions are viewed as the prize by these groups. Need consistent outcomes vital to our interests.